

MID DEVON TRACTOR ENGINE & MACHINERY GROUP

NEWSLETTER ~ MAY 2022



Chairmans Chat

Welcome to the Spring/Summer edition of our club newsletter. Our members have enjoyed a full winter programme of meetings. The highlight for me was our Christmas meal out, a pleasant departure from the norm, which was well supported.

Thank you to everybody involved in our past season of indoor meetings.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new and returning members, our total membership is now at pre-covid levels in our 40th anniversary year.

Our 40th anniversary will be celebrated at Cleaveanger Farm, Coleridge on Saturday 15th October from 12.00 noon with a Birthday Gas Up.

More details later but please note the date and plan your exhibits. We will have a large hard standing site available courtesy of Mr and Mrs P Stanbury.

I will close in anticipation of a successful season of outdoor events. Our next club meeting indoors, at Morchard Bishop, will be on Wednesday 21st September .

John Moore

Sunnymead Rally

Mike Lee is happy to announce that the day was a huge success, very well attended and appreciated by all who came to enjoy the day. The proceeds amounted to a magnificent £3767. 94 and this will be shared by Devon Air Ambulance Trust and Thorverton Jubilee celebrations.

The Bingo held on the previous Friday evening was also well attended and, as usual the quality AND quantity of the meat prizes were very well received. It was very clear that those attending these events were happy and relieved to be able to gather together following the long period of the pandemic when such events were not possible. Great thanks to Michael and his team for all the work and effort put into making this such a huge success.

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John Deere Tractors by Phil Bragg

I have been asked by the club to do a little write up on my assortment of old John Deeres.

Not really my forte but when asked so nicely by Tina, who could say no!!

Guess I should start at the beginning which takes us back to 1967 when on the family farm we were looking for a replacement for our much loved David Brown 990 and somehow, due to some

good salesmanship from my uncle (who was part of a fledgling dealership, Devon Machinery Services), finished up with a John Deere 710. At that time JDs were uncommon in the UK and the choice was limited to either a 96 HP 4020 built in America (which for us at the time seemed far too big and expensive) or a 56hp 710 which was based on a Lanz and built in Manheim Germany. The 710 was the first European JD to be imported into the UK.

At that time we had 4 different tractor makes (MF 165, Nuffield 10/60 and Fordson Major) and the 710 soon became the favourite. 5 years later we traded it in for a 2030 with a cab!! and within a few years all of our tractors in use were JD.

Later during a 10 year period of contracting (1989-99) we were running upwards of 12 John Deere tractors and machines.

Then in 1997 when visiting the local JD dealer Smallridge Bros I spotted a 710 in the workshop. I thought, '710, unusual to see one of those'. Naturally I wandered over to take a look and when I walked around the back and saw the registration plate I couldn't believe it – it was our old tractor. For old times' sake I tried to persuade Dave Smallridge to sell it back but he was having none of it. It was NOT FOR SALE!

Eight years later on Christmas Day 2005 Neil (my son) showed up with it on the driveway decorated with tinsel. A total surprise!

It's difficult to remember detail from that far back but I would say that was the start of the obsession with old JDs.



710 at the New Buildings working day

All JDs up to 1960 were 2 cylinder and mostly horizontal. I found them very intriguing, so when Brocks, (dealers who we traded with in the machinery business) had a 1949 model B for sale I gave in to temptation. Not long after they had a model R (which was JDs first diesel started with a petrol donkey engine) and so on it went.

Most opportunities to buy something different in this country were taken and it soon became a challenge to get styled and un-styled examples with different configurations of all the lettered models. This resulted in purchases from America, Canada and more recently Belgium.

Some have needed a considerable amount of work to get them to an acceptable standard so I've undertaken a few restorations which we all know always takes a lot more time and effort than anticipated. I certainly wouldn't want to be paying myself!!! Among the restorations are a 1946 BO Lindeman crawler, the 710 and a 1965 4020 originally sold (along with a forage harvester and 5 furrow semi mounted plough) by Devon Machinery Services to J.G Quick and Partners Newton St Cyres.



4020 with my cousin Nigel Skinnars No. 12 forager at Langar

4020 with plough

The 4020 was finished in Sept 2016 just in time to be reunited with the forager at the John Deere UK headquarters in Langar Nottingham for the 50th year in the UK anniversary celebration.



Have just now completed a 1946 BO Lindeman crawler restoration.

One important model that I was keen to get was John Deere's first tractor the Waterloo Boy.

As we were told by Stephen at the very informative March club night John Deere was a blacksmith, who, after moving from Vermont to Illinois noticed that farmers settling in the area were having trouble with the sticky soil, an unexpected challenge compared to the sandy soil of their homeland. They tried and tested cast iron mould boards had to be scraped off and tended to every few feet making it almost impossible to plough. Deere, when working on a job in a saw mill picked up a broken steel saw blade took it back to the smithy and reshaped it into a mouldboard. It was a success and by 1849 Deere & Co were selling in the region of 2000 ploughs per year. However by the early 1900s they were beginning to realise that other manufacturers i.e. Fordson and IH were selling ploughs with their tractors and they needed a tractor to maintain sales. After developing their own (Dain 3 wheel all wheel drive) which proved too expensive to compete, Deere & Co bought the Waterloo Gasoline Engine Company for 2.3 million dollars. So in 1918 The Waterloo Boy became John Deere's first full production tractor and its 2 cylinder horizontal engine set a precedent for over 40 years. It was succeeded in 1924 by the model D (JDs first liveried tractor) which was in production for 30 years, thought to be the longest running tractor model ever.



*Waterloo Boy
in harness*

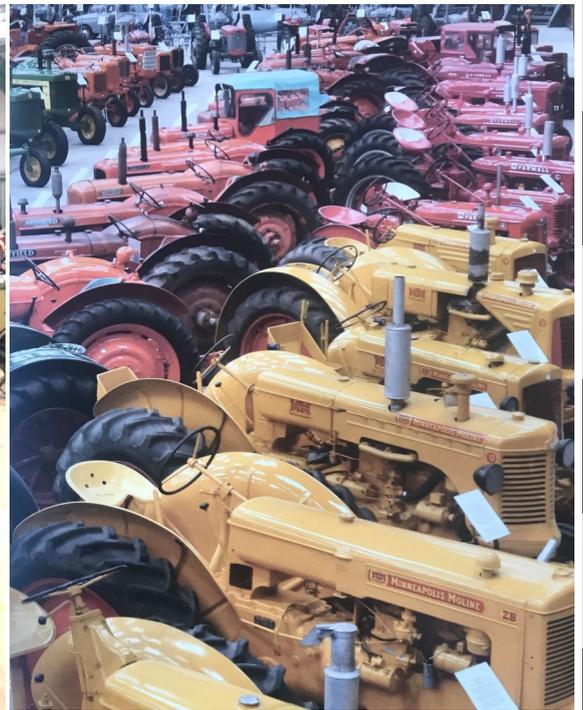


1928 Model D. An older restoration by the late Henry Roskilly who I'm sure many of you will remember

In September 2015 a large sale in Norfolk was advertised with around 200 vintage tractors. It was the Paul Rackham Collection and guess what! although John Deere was not that well represented, he had a **1920 Waterloo Boy**.

I set my limit and set off to Norfolk with my cousin Paul Stanbury. Fortunately the bidding stopped well within the limit so I also bought a 1935 GP. Paul (who said he had no intention of buying anything) finished up buying a Minneapolis Moline.

Good day for both of us. A very impressive collection all in one massive shed covering 1 acre and 4 acres of freshly laid concrete for parking!! Quite something!!



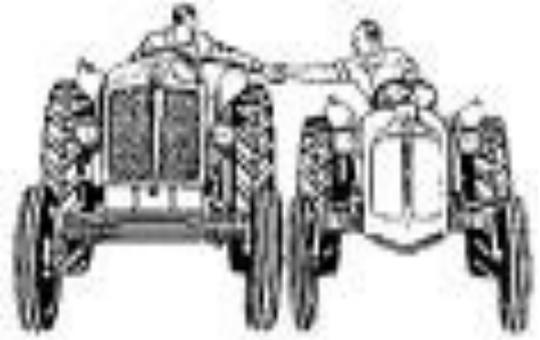
Rackham Sale

Section of the Rackham Sale



**Mid Devon Tractor Engine &
Machinery Group**

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Speakers & Club Events for early 2022

May 28-30	Launceston Steam & Vintage Rally details available online
June 4-5th	South Molton Rally - new venue - Alswear Old Road
June 5th	Tavistock Steam Fair - details available online
June 25th	Coldridge Fete & Rally
June 30th	Devon County Show
- July 2nd	
July 17th	Wadebridge Wheels - details available online
July 23rd	Mid Devon Show
July 26-30th	Chulmleigh Old Fair
July 22-24th	Boconnoc Steam Fair - details available online
Aug 3rd	North Devon Show - details available online
Aug 4th	Honiton Show
Aug 5th	Torbay Steam Fair - details available online
Aug 6th	Morchard Bishop Rally & Fun Day Contact Annie Robinson 01363 877297
Aug 11th	Okehampton Show - details available online
Aug 18th	Chagford Show
Aug 20 - 21st	'Yesterdays Farming' - details available online
Aug 25 - 29th	Great Dorset Steam Fair
Sept 10th	Working Day - Bow
Sept 21st	Meeting - TBC
Oct 15th	40th Anniversary Celebrations at Cleaveanger Farm Coleridge from 12 noon
Oct	Club Autumn Road run - TBC
Oct 29th	West Somerset Steam Railway Autumn Gala -details available online
- 2nd Nov	
Nov 16th	AGM
Dec	Christmas Party - TBC